

REMARKS

Favorable reconsideration of this application, in view of the following comments, is respectfully requested.

Claims 1-22 are pending in this application. In the outstanding Office Action, Claims 1-12, 14-15, and 19-22 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 6,424,429 to Takahashi in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,724,941 to Aoyama; Claims 16-18 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as unpatentable over Takahashi in view of Aoyama and further in view of U.S. Patent No. 7,057,767 to Tretter; and Claim 13 was indicated as including allowable subject matter.

Applicants appreciate the Examiner indicating that Claim 13 includes allowable subject matter. However, for at least the reasons set forth below, Applicants respectfully submit that all pending Claims 1-22 are in condition for allowance.

Specifically, the applied art does not teach or suggest an embedded-information extraction unit that extracts the decision information from the image signal received, a parameter setting unit that determines a degree of alteration of the image based on the decision information extracted and sets an image processing parameter based on the degree of alteration determined, and an image processing unit that subjects the image signal received to image processing based on the image processing parameters set, as recited in Claim 1 and similarly recited in the remaining independent claims.

Instead, Takahashi discloses that in the server 12, a CPU 41 fetches the appended data for identifying document data and adds the appended data to the document data in order to easily use the server as a file unit. The appended data fetched by the CPU 41 includes a user ID, a title given to the document, keywords used in the text to be extracted, and particular information for contents of document data such as a number of output times that the same document data is repeatedly reused. As such, there is no teaching or suggestion for an

embedded-information extraction unit that extracts the decision information from the image signal received.

The Office Action acknowledges that Takahashi does not disclose the remaining features of the independent claims discussed above. However, the Office Action asserts that Aoyama makes up for this deficiency. Applicants respectfully disagree. Specifically, Aoyama merely discloses as shown in Figure 2, various types of image processing that include pixel density conversion for converting image data into image data having a different pixel density, formatting for carrying out conversion into or from image data of a predetermined format that has image data of a plurality of types of resolutions (pixel densities) which differ from one another and that divide the image data of different resolutions into a plurality of small regions.

Further in Aoyama, a sharpness enhancement processing program allows the CPU 40 to execute sharpness enhancement processing, as stored in the CD-ROM 52 at the beginning, together with programs for allowing the CPU 40 to execute other image processings. Then, when the time has come to execute the sharpness enhancement processing, the sharpness enhancement processing program is read from the hard disk integrated into the hard disk device 50 so as to be stored in the RAM 44, in this way the sharpness enhancement processing program is executed by the CPU 40.

Accordingly, there is no teaching or suggestion for a parameter setting unit that determines a degree of alteration of the image based on the decision information extracted and sets an image processing parameter based on the degree of alteration determined and an image processing unit that subjects the image signal received to image processing based on the image processing parameter set, as recited in the independent claims.

Moreover, it is respectfully submitted that there is no basis in the teachings of either Takahashi or Aoyama to support their applied combination. Certainly, the outstanding Office

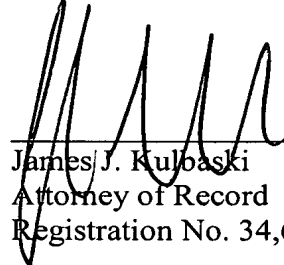
Action fails to cite to any specific teachings within either reference to support the applied combination. Accordingly, it is respectfully submitted that the combination of the applied art is the result of hindsight reconstruction in view of the teachings of the present specification, and it is improper. Withdrawal of the rejection of the claims under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) is respectfully requested.

Consequently, for the reasons discussed in detail above, no further issues are believed to be outstanding in the present application, and the present application is believed to be in condition for formal allowance. Therefore, a Notice of Allowance is earnestly solicited.

Should the Examiner deem that any further action is necessary to place this application in even better form for allowance, the Examiner is encouraged to contact the undersigned representative at the below listed telephone number.

Respectfully submitted,

OBLON, SPIVAK, McCLELLAND,
MAIER & NEUSTADT, P.C.



James J. Kulbaski
Attorney of Record
Registration No. 34,648

Kevin M. McKinley
Registration No. 43,794

Customer Number

22850

Tel: (703) 413-3000
Fax: (703) 413-2220
(OSMMN 06/04)

JJK:KMM\dt

I:\ATTY\KMM\PROSECUTION WORK\248734\248734US-AM.DOC